

Alternative Daily Cover

Tire shreds are used as ADC at some landfills to cover disposed waste at the end of each day. In 2015, three landfills reported they used a total of 1.5 million PTEs (15,217 tons) of tire shreds as ADC, essentially the same amount used in 2014 at four landfills. This amount is expected to remain flat in 2016.

Tire ADC replaces dirt and can substitute for other ADC materials such as ground yard debris. The landfill's operating permit must allow for this use, the shreds must meet specifications, and use of ADC is limited to dry weather conditions. Tire ADC can sometimes provide landfills with a cost advantage if the landfill would be required to purchase other materials for use as cover; however, materials such as yard debris are readily available onsite at most landfills, while operational hurdles to using tires as ADC limit their use. (As of January 1, 2020, the use of yard debris and other "green material" as ADC does not constitute diversion through recycling and shall be considered disposal pursuant to PRC Section 41781.3. (2)(A)). Some landfills that do use tire ADC can potentially consume large quantities of waste tires. Processors typically must pay a tip fee or, at best, may have zero cost for disposing of the tire shreds to landfills for use as ADC, although they still must pay transportation costs.

Other Diversion

Products in the "Other Diversion" category may include rings cut from truck tires used to weigh down construction traffic barrels, weights for agricultural film plastic, or other uses. In 2015 100,000 PTE was reported as "Other Diversion," similar to the amount reported in 2014.

Tire-Derived Fuel

Four California cement kilns continue to use significant quantities of processed TDF or baled waste tires, providing a strong, steady market that thrives without government support. (CalRecycle is precluded from promoting TDF markets by statute.) In 2015, these plants consumed 8.6 million California PTEs, 2 percent more than in 2014. We estimate that these plants also used an additional 1.1 million PTEs that were supplied by California processors but were imported from outside the state (based on allocation of imports across the market segments served by California processors receiving imported tires). One plant reported that its TDF use increased by nearly 7 percent as a result of increased demand, while another plant indicated it is already using near the maximum allowable amount of TDF based on its permits. (The other two plants did not respond to this part of the survey.) In addition to these volumes, the plants also reported consuming a total of 12,523 tons of tire fiber, an increase over the 9,919 tons consumed in 2014, comprising the majority of fiber generated by California crumb rubber producers. The cement kilns reported no difficulty in obtaining adequate supplies of whole tires or TDF, with stable pricing. TDF and tire fluff use in 2016 is expected to be close to the 2015 level.